

Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Annual Survey of Public Employment Statistics* Users Respondent Base

U.S. Census Bureau
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

(1) Monthly

0.0%;	0	None
66.7%;	32	Retail Sales
58.3%;	28	Wholesale Trade
60.4%;	29	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
62.5%;	30	Housing Starts
77.1%;	37	Building Permits
62.5%;	30	New Home Sales
60.4%;	29	Value of New Construction Put in Place
45.8%;	22	Housing Completions
37.5%;	18	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
47.9%;	23	New Residential Construction
31.2%;	15	New Mobile Home Placements
52.1%;	25	Monthly Imports and Exports
64.6%;	31	Current Industrial Reports
54.2%;	26	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

Replies 48; Forms 53

(2) Quarterly

52.8%;	19	Quarterly Financial Report
83.3%;	30	Current Industrial Reports
16.7%;	6	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
30.6%;	11	Quarterly Tax Survey
22.2%;	8	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

Replies 36; Forms 53

(3) Annual

73.6%;	39	Annual Retail Trade
69.8%;	37	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
52.8%;	28	Annual Survey of Communications
60.4%;	32	Transportation Annual Survey
60.4%;	32	Service Annual Survey
86.8%;	46	County Business Patterns

50.9%;	27	ZIP Code Business Patterns
64.2%;	34	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
43.4%;	23	Characteristics of New Housing
67.9%;	36	Annual Building Permits
39.6%;	21	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
54.7%;	29	Annual Capital Expenditures
83.0%;	44	Annual Survey of Manufactures
66.0%;	35	Current Industrial Reports
35.8%;	19	Research and Development Survey
41.5%;	22	Plant Capacity Utilization
43.4%;	23	Education Finance Survey
62.3%;	33	State Tax Collection Survey
35.8%;	19	Annual Public Employee Retirement
100.0%;	53	Annual Survey of Public Employment
54.7%;	29	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
77.4%;	41	State Government Finances
64.2%;	34	Annual Imports and Exports

Replies 53; Forms 53

II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

92.5%;	49	Printed Publications	24.5%;	13	Direct (E-mail) delivery
84.9%;	45	World Wide Web (Internet)	18.9%;	10	FAX
64.2%;	34	CD-ROMs	1.9%;	1	Regular mail
30.2%;	16	Diskettes	9.4%;	5	Other

Replies 53; Forms 53

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- Check values by telephone
 - also use microfiche in some cases.
 - Internet, ProNet
 - Tape, Cartridge
 - FTP
 - building permits printout
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(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

63.5%;	33	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
36.5%;	19	ASCII delimited
34.6%;	18	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
26.9%;	14	ASCII flat files
17.3%;	9	Do not manipulate data
11.5%;	6	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
3.8%;	2	Other

Replies 52; Forms 53

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- Excel

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

39.5%;	17	5	14.0%;	6	3	16.3%;	7	1
16.3%;	7	4	2.3%;	1	2	11.6%;	5	Don't know

Replies 43; Forms 53

(7) b. E-mail notification:

47.7%;	21	5	27.3%;	12	3	9.1%;	4	1
4.5%;	2	4	4.5%;	2	2	6.8%;	3	Don't know

Replies 44; Forms 53

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

63.3%;	31	5	12.2%;	6	3	4.1%;	2	1
16.3%;	8	4	0.0%;	0	2	4.1%;	2	Don't know

Replies 49; Forms 53

(9) d. Search:

79.6%;	39	5	4.1%;	2	3	2.0%;	1	1
12.2%;	6	4	2.0%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 49; Forms 53

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

73.9%;	34	5	10.9%;	5	3	2.2%;	1	1
8.7%;	4	4	4.3%;	2	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 46; Forms 53

(11) f. Download selected data:

81.6%;	40	5	6.1%;	3	3	0.0%;	0	1
10.2%;	5	4	2.0%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 49; Forms 53

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

28.9%;	13	5	28.9%;	13	3	6.7%;	3	1
17.8%;	8	4	8.9%;	4	2	8.9%;	4	Don't know

Replies 45; Forms 53

(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

36.2%;	17	5	21.3%;	10	3	4.3%;	2	1
19.1%;	9	4	17.0%;	8	2	2.1%;	1	Don't know

Replies 47; Forms 53

(14) i. Charts and graphs:

34.7%;	17	5	24.5%;	12	3	10.2%;	5	1
16.3%;	8	4	12.2%;	6	2	2.0%;	1	Don't know

Replies 49; Forms 53

(15) j. Geographic maps:

32.6%;	15	5	19.6%;	9	3	10.9%;	5	1
21.7%;	10	4	10.9%;	5	2	4.3%;	2	Don't know

Replies 46; Forms 53

(16) k. Other, please specify:

100.0%;	3	electronic bulletin board	0.0%;	0	Other
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Replies 3; Forms 53

• [none]

(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

0.0%;	0	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 0; Forms 53

III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

25.5%;	13	No	74.5%;	38	Yes
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Replies 51; Forms 53

(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

66.7%;	34	latest 1 or 2 periods	56.9%;	29	trends up to 1 year
66.7%;	34	trends up to 5 years	0.0%;	0	Other
66.7%;	34	5+ years			

Replies 51; Forms 53

(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

62.0%;	31	Perform patron/client inquiries
48.0%;	24	Create value-added products/services
30.0%;	15	Republish in newspaper/journal
24.0%;	12	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
12.0%;	6	Inform investment decisions
12.0%;	6	Inform marketing decisions
10.0%;	5	Locate new sites
0.0%;	0	Other

Replies 50; Forms 53

- [none]
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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

89.8%;	44	Narrative text describing survey results
81.6%;	40	Definition of terms
63.3%;	31	Sampling and estimation methodology
53.1%;	26	Survey design
4.1%;	2	None
2.0%;	1	Other

Replies 49; Forms 53

- Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
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(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

- Foreign trade - exports & imports - by 4-digit (data that had been available in "Trades Employment") - without SIC (& soon NAIC), cannot compare trade with domestic activity.
- MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
- The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
- We use and would like to continue to use retail sales by county data and the merchandise line sales data.
- Number of Mobile Homes & Value of, by state, on a monthly basis. (Currently only published annually) -- Also, by county, if possible.
- Miss the state retail sales numbers.
- Non-residential building permits data nad value of new non-residential construction part in place.
- YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
- Commodity flows data with 3 digit SIC value of shipments between states-The state to state flows.
- More frequent substate mtg. stats (annual survey is state wide only)
- 1). Employment in types of projects, such as residential construction. 2). Construction productivity measures.
- None that I can think of at the moment
- Would like Government Finance series in print form.
- The 1997 Census is not out yet.
- Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
- Service Data on an manual/quarterly/monthly basis by 2,3, & 4-digit SIC!
- Crime--not all areas of the U.S. participate in their state uniform crime reports program, so it becomes difficult to make informed decisions.
- Median income and poverty tables are not in spreadsheet form (they one were).
- Far better data on service sector; tons of coverage. Need data on enterprises as well as

- establishments.
- sub-national retail trade

IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

71.4%;	35	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
67.3%;	33	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
65.3%;	32	2-digit major groups
57.1%;	28	3-digit industry groups
0.0%;	0	Other

Replies 49; Forms 53

- [none]
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(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

14.0%;	7	I was unaware of this
24.0%;	12	I am partially aware, but lack details
62.0%;	31	I am aware and understand some implications

Replies 50; Forms 53

12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

77.4%;	24	A brochure that explains NAICS	32.3%;	10	Conference announcements
74.2%;	23	NAICS implementation plans	3.2%;	1	Other

Replies 31; Forms 53

- I am awaiting CD-ROM!
-

(27) No Thanks -

57.1%;	12	I will check the Census Bureau's web site (www.census.gov/naics)
42.9%;	9	I don't need more information about NAICS

Replies 21; Forms 53

V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

34.6%;	18 Government	5.8%;	3 Media
30.8%;	16 Academic/Research	1.9%;	1 Library
23.1%;	12 Business	3.8%;	2 Other

Replies 52; Forms 53

- Library (University
 - University
-

(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

37.7%;	20 Yes	62.3%;	33 No
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Replies 53; Forms 53

(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

44.0%;	22 None	6.0%;	3 Census Information Center
26.0%;	13 State Data Center	18.0%;	9 Other
6.0%;	3 Business/Industry Data Center		

Replies 50; Forms 53

- State Government Agency.
 - Richmond Public Library, BST Dept. 101 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219
 - Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
 - Government
 - Depository
 - Affiliate Data Center
 - Data use.
 - GPO Depository
 - Affiliate
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(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

83.3%;	40 Yes	16.7%;	8 No
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Replies 48; Forms 53

(36) Question 21. Remarks:

- 1). It is important to be able to retrieve data in easy to use formats (spreadsheet or ascii)- "pdf" formats are convenient to print, but difficult to use. 2). Please see question 9. 3). We are concerned about the discontinuity in time series data that will occur with NAICS. The 1987 SIC change was a significant problem-NAICS will likely be much worse. Any help from Census (bridges, publication of data in both classifications) would be a great help to data users.
- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my news off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
- Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
- --But please ask for Deborah Foster.

Thank you.

- We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
- Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
- We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
- I appreciate receiving this survey.
- The Web site is great, but it is sometimes difficult to quickly find the information I'm seeking. Also, I am mystified by your downloading parameters. Things should be in dbf format, which is more universally accessible to database managers than mdb.
- We are in the site selection/economic development function. Census data is absolutely crucial to our function, especially the ability to compare areas.
- We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.
- Will all Census data be available only via the Internet? My customers prefer printed format. Thank you.

Figure 1: